Monthly What’s on Guide for February 2024

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# Monthly What’s On Guide

Welcome to your monthly update of local accessible services and events across Bristol, Bath & NE Somerset, and South Gloucestershire.

In this update we have primarily included dates for February 2024, there are some events that are taking place later in the year to give you time if you need to plan ahead. Next month’s guide will be sent out at the end of February.

# Sight Support West of England Events and Notices

## Blindingly Funny Comedy Night

Sight Support West of England proudly presents **Blindingly Funny** – an evening of comedy, confessions, and compassion.

It will be held at the wonderful Tobacco Factory in Bristol, on the evening of Tuesday 6th of February from 7.30pm.

We have a fabulous line up of 5 acts – the best comedians you may have never heard of, poetry perfection and proof that you don’t need to be blind to be funny though it helps! Our acts are:

* Louise Leigh, Bristol based comedian who will be our magnificent MC.
* Si Deaves, who is a writer and podcaster as well as being described as one of the country’s most original undiscovered performers.
* David C Johnson – he has been described as Bristol’s answer to John Hegley.
* Lizzy Lenco – We don’t often think of blindness as funny – but that doesn’t stop the lovely Lizzy! Think disability, heavy metal and cream cakes – that will give you the idea!
* Jake Donaldson, who is headlining our Blindingly Funny night, describes himself as visually impaired and perpetually anxious. However, this does not stop him being a sex-magnet and supremely funny.

Tickets cost just £15 and are available from the Tobacco Factory Theatres website on the link below or you can call them on 0117 902 0344. [Buy tickets to Blindingly Funny on The Tobacco Factory Theatres website](https://tobaccofactorytheatres.com/shows/blindingly-funny/)

Buying a ticket for Blindingly Funny is one of the many ways you can support the important work of Sight Support West of England. Tickets to this event would also make a fantastic Christmas present!

### There’s ****even more!****

You also have the chance to win a pair of tickets to see superstar Sarah Millican at the Bristol Beacon on Friday the 5th of July 2024 – see our dedicated page by clicking the button below or buy your tickets on the night!

[Sarah Millican raffle – win 2 tickets!](https://www.sightsupportwest.org.uk/get-involved/raffle-sarah-millican/)

**We hope to see you on the night and please help us by spreading the word!**

## Tech Training & Support

We will be offering one-to-one support to help you become confident using everyday technology. The sessions will take place at either our Fishponds or Thornbury Resource Centre.

We are also offering one-to-one support with your phone / tablet from our tech volunteers in our Bristol, Bath and South Glos community hubs. Call us to book an appointment.

## Smart Phone and Tablets for Beginners

Would you like to use the internet on a smart phone or tablet but are daunted and not sure where to start? We can help. Accessing the virtual world is much more straightforward than you might imagine. With our support you will soon be online, keeping in touch with friends and family and navigating the internet with ease.

Join our FREE four-week Beginners Smart Phone and Tablet Training Course for people with low vision. Learn how to use a touch screen and gain key skills such as using email or searching for information. Also discover useful apps and accessibility features that can help people with low vision get the most out of the digital world.

Courses will take place:

* Mondays 1.30 to 3.30pm 4th – 25th March

Trinity-Henleaze United Reformed Church, Waterford Road, Henleaze, Bristol, BS9 4BT.

* Wednesdays 10am to 12pm – 6th – 27th March

Broadmead Baptist Church, Union Street, Bristol, BS1 3HY.

* Thursdays 10am to 12pm – 7th – 28th March

The Park Centre Kingwood, High Street, BS15 4AR.

Contact Sam Edwards for more information, to book your place on the course or for more information about receiving tech support at one of our hubs:

 0117 3224885 sam.edwards@sightsupportwest.org.uk

# Sight Support Community Hubs and Social Groups

Here is a listing of our community hubs and social groups coming up this month. You can also find up to date information on our website at [Events - Sight Support West of England](https://www.sightsupportwest.org.uk/events/eye-can-bath/)

**Hubs** – At our Sight Loss Advice hubs you will find information, guidance, and advice. Our Sight Loss Advisors can demonstrate a variety of assistive equipment and technology. They have lighting, magnifiers, talking watches, liquid level indicators and much more, so please think about coming along. We also offer tech support and training from a trained advisor or trained volunteers at many of our hubs. For some hubs you will need to book an appointment but others you can just pop along, check each hub listing for more information.

**Social Groups** - Some of our Hubs have a volunteer led social group running alongside them, and some social groups take place independently of a hub. Our social groups are a place where people with sight loss can come together, share experiences, swap tips and tricks for living with sight loss and most importantly chat, relax, and enjoy each other’s company. Our groups are run by lovely volunteers who will make you feel welcome. Sight loss doesn’t have to mean being isolated, so why not come along to one of our friendly social groups.

## Ashton Coffee & Convo – Social Group Only

Bristol Indoor Bowls Club, South Liberty Lane, Ashton, Bristol

Every second Wednesday, 11am to 1pm: 7th & 21st February.

## Bath - Sight Loss Advice Hub – Appointment Only

Bath Central Library, 19-23 The Podium, Bath BA1 5AN

2nd Tuesday of the month – 10am to 1pm: 13th February – appointment only, contact us to book.

## Bedminster - Sight Loss Advice Hub & Social Group

Guide Dogs Southwest Regional Centre, 10 Stillhouse Lane, Bristol, BS3 4EB. Enter using the pedestrian gated entrance to the left of the car park entrance as you look at it. You will then need to ring the doorbell on the left of the front door, and someone will let you in.

1st Friday of every month: 5th January.

* Drop in to see your advisor between 10am & 11am.
* Appointments available – contact us to book.
* Social group at this hub between 10am & 1pm.
* Tech support available with volunteers during drop-in session

## Bradley Stoke Sight Loss Advice Hub – Appointment Only – date change

Bradley Stoke Library, 1 Fiddlers Wood Lane, BS32 9BS.

3rd Thursday of the month 10am to 1pm: 15th February - appointment only, contact us to book.

## Bristol Coffee & Convo – Social Group Only

Boswells, The Galleries, Bristol

2nd Saturday of each month – 11am to 1pm: 11TH February.

## Bristol Resource Centre – Appointment Only

Sight Support West of England, The Vassall Centre, Gill Avenue, Bristol, BS16 2QQ.

Tech support and training available - by appointment.

You can visit our resource centre every Thursday by appointment only.

## Chew Valley Sight Loss Advice Hub – Appointment Only

Stanton Drew Village Hall, Sandy Lane, Stanton Drew
BS39 4EL

2nd Wednesday of the month – 10.30am to 12.15pm: 14TH February – appointment only, contact us to book.

## Henleaze Sight Loss Advice Hub & Social Group

Meeting at the Coffee Bar, entrance off the Waterford Road Entrance. Trinity Church Henleaze, Waterford Road, Henleaze, Bristol, BS9 4BT.

1st Monday of next month: 10am to 1pm: 5th February 2024.

* Drop in to see your advisor between 11am & 12pm.
* Appointments available – contact us to book.
* Social group at this hub between 11am & 1pm.
* Tech support available with volunteers during drop-in session

Due to Henleaze hub in April and may landing on Bank holidays we have changed the dates to So instead of 1st April, it would be 8th of April, And instead of 6th of May, it would be 13th of May

## Keynsham Sight Loss Advice Hub & Social Group

Libourne Lounge, Keynsham Library, Keynsham Civic Centre, Market Walk, Keynsham, BS31 1FS

3rd Friday of the month – 2pm to 4pm: 17TH February.

* Drop in to see your advisor between 2pm & 3pm.
* Appointments available – contact us to book.
* Social group at this hub between 2pm & 4pm.
* Tech support available with volunteers during drop-in session.

## Kingswood Sight Loss Advice Hub & Social Group

The Park Centre Kingswood, High Street, Kingswood Bristol BS15 4AR

1st Thursday of the month: 1ST February.

* Drop in to see your advisor between 10am & 11am.
* Appointments available – contact us to book.
* Social group at this hub between 10am & 12pm.
* Tech support available by appointment.

## Midsomer Norton Sight Loss Advice Hub & Social Group – New Venue

Midsomer Norton Methodist Church, High St, Midsomer Norton, Radstock, BA3 2DR

2nd Friday of the month – 10am to 12pm: 9th February.

* Appointments available – contact us to book.
* Social group at this hub between 10am & 12pm.
* Tech support available with volunteers

The hub will be in a room just off the main hall. People on reception or in the hall can direct visitors to the hub.
From February, Midsomer Norton will have an additional social group meet up each month. The extra social group will meet on the fourth Friday 10am-12pm: 23rd February at the new venue, new attendees very welcome. \*no sight loss advice will be available at this secondary social group.

## Thornbury Resource Centre – Appointment Only

Sight Support Charity Shop, 18 High Street, Thornbury, BS35 2AH

Appointments are available every Monday – please contact us to book your appointment.

Tech support and training available - by appointment.

Please note: the consultation room is on the first floor, we have a stair lift in place but if you feel you would have difficulty using it, we can make your appointment at Thornbury Library instead.

## Whitchurch Sight Loss Advice Hub & Social Group

The ABC Centre, Chessington Avenue, Whitchurch, Bristol, BS14 9EW

2nd Monday of the month: 12th February.

* Drop in to see your advisor between 2pm & 3pm.
* Appointments available – contact us to book.
* Social group at this hub between 2pm & 4pm.
* Tech support available by appointment.

## Yate Sight Loss Advice Hub - Appointment Only – date change

Yate Library, Unit 44 Yate Shopping Centre, West Walk, Yate, BS37 4AX.

2nd Thursday of the month – 10am to 1pm: 12th February. Appointment only, contact us to book.

## Yate Sight Loss Friendship Group – Social Group Only

Soho Coffee Co, Yate Leisure Centre - first floor, Kennedy Way, BS37 4DQ

1st Wednesday of each month, 11am to 1pm: 7th February.

# Events From Other Organisations

These events and notices are from other organisations. Please check with the contact given that the event is going ahead as planned. Sometimes changes need to be made to dates and times at short notice, so it is best to check with the organisation before the event takes place.

# Local Leisure and Sporting Activities / Events

## That Farm Life in Bath with LOOK

That farm life: mental health and wellbeing through farming with LOOK, Jamie’s Farm and The Vision Foundation Fight For Sight

For VI young adults aged 16 – 25

Online previsit meeting - Thurs 1 Feb 6.30pm-8pm. The opportunity to get to know your fellow farmers and start the conversation about what mental health looks like for VI young adults, as well as get an idea of what you’ll be doing at Jamie’s Farm.

Event - Sat 9th March day 10am-3pm. During the day together at Jamie’s Farm they will start at 10am and be working on the farm together, eating together and enjoying the outdoors until 3pm.

They can also offer transport picking up from Bath train station at 9.30am, and dropping off at Bath station at 3:30pm.

## National Trust VI Walks at Tyntesfield Estate

Learn about the history of this fascinating place and use your senses to engage with nature on this intimate and interactive tour.

The free tours will take place on the second and fourth Friday of each month from 11am – see website for dates. They will accompany 6 visually-impaired individuals (and an accompanying individual) on a 3/4 mile accessible trail. [National Trust Website - Walks at Tyntesfield](https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/bath-bristol/tyntesfield/events/e072f0cd-02d8-4ad4-b6c6-a6afc350c4e5) Call 01275461900

## VIP Reading Group – Bristol Central Library, College Green

The reading group, for visually impaired people takes place on the last Thursday of every month from 10.30 till 12. New members are welcome.

Audio books are chosen by members from RNIB’s talking book service or Calibre – so it’s helpful if you have already signed up to those services. The next books are:

* 29 February – The Slowworm’s Song by Andrew Miller. Set in Somerset, Belfast and Bristol. An ex-soldier is called to give evidence at an inquiry in Belfast. It’s a story of guilt, trust and father’s yearning to atone (RNIB)
* 28 March - The Tortoise and the Hare – by Elizabeth Jenkins. A subtle modern classic. Set during the 1950s in a world of tweeds and twin-sets and pearls.
* 25 April - Bournville by Jonathan Coe - no prizes for guessing where that might be set. In it Coe explores post-war history - almost to the present day - through the eyes of a Birmingham clan. Expect bitter satire.

For further information please email vibookgroup.bristol@gmail.com or ring Katharine Seymour at the Central Library on 07880 069877

## Visually Impaired Tennis

Chipping Sodbury Tennis Club, Tuesday evenings 6 to 7pm, contact Ben Hardwick tennisaceben@hotmail.co.uk

## RNIB Telephone Groups

* Gardening Group Talk everything gardening. Every two weeks on Tuesdays from 11am to 12 noon.
* Book Group. Different book each month. Third Tuesday of the month

Bernice.Cocking@rnib.org.uk or 07761 328571.

George.Hinton@rnib.org.uk Tricia.sail@rnib.org.uk

## Visual Impairment Friendly Rowing

Learn to row in a fun and friendly environment. Sighted rowers will provide support if required. Contact volunteering@allaboardwatersports.co.uk

## Find a Sensory Walk Near You

Sense have partnered with [Ordnance Survey](https://updates-sense.org.uk/6RW-8AFYT-A1ZIP7-559AJL-1/c.aspx) to help you find and follow an accessible waling route. Call Sense: 0300 330 9256 or visit www.sense.org.uk/our-services/

## Street Dance Sessions from Steetenvy Dance Academy

Supported by Access Sport. Classes are for all ages contact: streetenvydanceacademy@hotmail.com or Access Sport - Email: jonny.fenner@accesssport.co.uk / 07878 814396

## Robins Foundation VI Football Sessions

Adult & youth VI football sessions from the Robins Foundation. Email edward.studley@bcfc.co.uk or call 07899 991983.

## Free Accessible Cricket Sessions

Fully accessible free cricket sessions. No experience necessary. Contact jeanette.tate@gloucestershirecricketfoundation.org

## Accessible Cricket

Gloucestershire Visually Impaired Cricket Club are looking for players for the 2024 season. Contact Phil Gingel for more info bristolbluephil@googlemail.com 07973 480372.

## Fitness Class for Blind and Visually Impaired People

Specialised low impact exercise class for blind and visually impaired people at Kingswood. Contact Hayley or Marcella for more info: 07525 790951rechargeft@gmail.com

## VI Runners Bristol

If you would like to find out more about this group visit their ‘VI Runners Bristol’ Facebook page and send them a message.

## Roll and Stroll

Free walking and rolling group for disabled people. Contact Dan Mch.bristoldef@gmail.com or call 07552 580678.

## Two’s Company

A tandem cycling project for adults and young people in Bristol who are blind or visually impaired. Call 0117 353 4580 or email twos-company@lifecycle.org.uk or visit [www.lifecycleuk.org.uk](http://www.lifecycleuk.org.uk)

## Soul Trail Wellbeing Walks

Soul Trail Wellbeing have received training in how to offer sighted guiding. Email: soultrailwellbeing@gmail.com

# Support Groups and Courses

## Retina UK Bristol, Bath & Wilts Peer Support Group Meeting

Welcoming zoom meetings for people to meet and share experiences, tips and information. Call 0300 111 4000.

## RNIB Tech Training Session Yate

RNIB run tech training sessions at Yate Library. Contact Chris Turner on 0303 123 9999 or tfl@rnib.org.uk

## RNIB Living Well with Sight Loss courses

Covering a broad range of subjects relating to sight loss including confident tips for everyday living, eye health, magnification, lighting and technology, wellbeing and much more.

Upcoming course dates:

Session 1: Monday 5th February

Session 2: Monday 12th February

Session 3: Monday 19th February

Session 4: Monday 26th February

Times: 11am

## RNIB Focus on Money Matters course

Session 1: Thursday 1st February

Session 2: Thursday 8th February

Session 3: Thursday 15th February

Session 4: Thursday 22nd February

Times: 11am

Contact: Bernice.Cocking@rnib.org.uk or 07761 328571.or George.Hinton@rnib.org.uk Tricia.sail@rnib.org.uk

## Macular Support Groups

* Broadmead - meets third Wednesday of every month:
10 am – 12pm. Broadmead Baptist Church, Union Street, Broadmead, Bristol BS1 3HY.
* Cote Lane - meets last Thursday of the month
2:30pm – 4pm. Saint Monica Trust, Cote Lane, Bristol, BS9
* Bath Macular Support Group - meets at Good Living room at St John's Foundation, behind the Cross Bath.
* Keynsham Macular Support Group - meeting on the last Wednesday of the month at 2pm at Saint Monica Trust, The Chocolate Quarter Retirement Village, Trajectus Way, Keynsham, BS31 2GJ.

Contact Jo Fishwick on 07947 373 244 or Jo.Fishwick@macularsociety.org to find out more information or find other groups.

## Thornbury Macular Support Group

Meets the first Tuesday of each month, 10.30 to 12.30 in the Methodist Church Hall in Castle Court, Thornbury, just off the High Street. Speakers and entertainment are arranged for each week. Tea / coffee and biscuits are provided. Contact marye.king@blueyonder.co.uk to find out more information.

## RNIB Online Group Discussion about social relationships

Join an online group discussion to talk about how sight loss has impacted your social relationships. Discussing your experiences with family and friends, romantic relationships, peers, and your local community. If your social relationships have been impacted, then this is the discussion for you!

You’ll be invited to attend 2 groups over a 2-week period. Each group will last approximately 2 hours 15 mins (15 min break included). The groups will be held online, via Teams. Don’t worry, RNIB can dial you into the call if needed.

**Tuesday 13 & 27 February at 5:30pm – 7:45pm**

**Wednesday 13 & 27 March at 2pm – 4:15pm**

If you’re interested in taking part, please complete this online form: [Voice of The Customer focus groups sign up form](https://forms.office.com/r/Ksmt6GFgr1)

Or you can call the RNIB Helpline on 0303 123 9999 and ask to sign up to the Voice of the Customer Focus Groups. If you have any questions or would like further information, please contact customervoice@rnib.org.uk.

## Sighted Guide Training from Guide Dogs

Guide Dogs offers a range of free sighted guide training. [www.guidedogs.org.uk/sightedguiding](http://www.guidedogs.org.uk/sightedguiding) 0800 781 1444.

## Chipping Sodbury Vision Support Group

Meets at Chipping Sodbury, Grammar School Rooms on the third Tuesday of every month at 2pm.  They have speakers and a social group.

Tel: 01454 851507 E-mail: csvision1924@outlook.com

## Sensory Support Service

Drop-in sessions on Thursdays from 11 am – 1 pm. Support you with reading letters / bills, making calls etc. Bedminster Library, 0117 914 1440, SMS: 07775 695 434.

## Torch Trust fellowship groups

Christian based fellowship. Contact: Stewart Simmons 0117 9624220 s@stewartsimmons.plus.com

## Torch fellowship groups

Torch Trust offer Christian based fellowship where blind and sighted people meet on equal terms.

South Fellowship Group - Usually meet the last Saturday of the month at 3pm, Location: Counterslip Baptist Church Hall, 648 Wells Road, Whitchurch, Bristol, BS14 9HT. Contact: Stewart Simmons Tel: 0117 9624220 e-mail s@stewartsimmons.plus.com

## Digital Glaucoma Support Group

Zoom webinar. Feb 13, 7pm

Topic: Glaucoma Jargon Busting!
POAG, PACG, NTG, VFT, MIGS - the list goes on! Join Helen Doe, Helpline Manager at Glaucoma UK to decode some of the most common terms used in glaucoma care and treatment!

Register in advance for this webinar: [Glaucoma Support Group webinar](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_yKi3eOZHTPiVmLh_EYI7RA) After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

## Assistive technology training - Yate

Assistive technology training hub based in Yate library - Wednesday afternoon during school term times. Trained volunteers are on hand to get visually impaired people up and running with their mobile devices. They will be offered 6 sessions. This can usually be extended if required.

If anyone is interested in attending, they should contact the tech for life team.tfl@rnib.org.uk

# Local Audio Described Arts Events

## Galleries and Museums

### Arnolfini Gallery

16 Narrow Quay, Bristol BS1 4QA

The next VI tours are Saturday 3 February. From 10 – 11 am

A described tour of **Eregata እርጋታ,** the first major solo European museum exhibition by one of Ethiopia’s leading contemporary artists, Elias Sime, introducing audiences to a man and maker of extraordinary craftsmanship and collaborative spirit.

Further details from community@arnolfini.org.uk

Tours are held before the galleries open so that the tours can be conducted without being disturbed.

### Review - Royal West of England Academy

Queens Rd, Bristol BS8 1PX

The next described tour is on 6 April. It’ll take as its subject the current exhibition -These Mad Hybrids: John Hoyland and Contemporary Sculpture. More details to follow in future editions.

But if you want know more now - please email Ellen Pye, Learning & Participation Assistant ellen.pye@rwa.org.uk

### Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery

Queen’s Road, BS8 1RL

### Making Waves: Mary Anning and her astonishing ichthyosaur.

Monday 26 February from 10.00 -12.00

At this session you will discover the incredible world of Mary Anning, an inspiring early palaeontologist, and learn about a special fossil, possibly her second major discovery, which is now on permanent display. You will have the opportunity to handle and engage with a life-sized reconstruction of the fossil skull, a 1.9 metre long model and hear about the conservation work required to put the fossil on display. Fossil material will also be available to handle in this tour. You will also find out about a miniature artist's model of a statue of Mary by sculptor Denise Dutton which is part of the Mary Anning Rocks! UK tour.

The session will be led by Deborah Hutchinson, Bristol Museums’ Geology Curator, and colleagues from the museum.

For more information or to book please email Debbie.hutchinson@bristol.gov.uk or telephone 0117 9223571. Alternatively book online via the museums’ website.

Please let them know if you are bringing a sighted companion with you so they can arrange for the right number of volunteers to support the session.

### Tour for VI patrons of the Wildlife Photographer of the Year Exhibition.

27 March from 6 – 7.30 pm after the museum closes to the public. It showcases Earth’s diversity and highlights the fragility of wildlife on our planet. The museum’s natural sciences curator will be there to talk about the exhibition and answer your questions.

To book contact reception on 0117 922 3571 or email steven.bradley@bristol.gov.uk

### Bath, Victoria Art Gallery

Art on Mondays talks for VI Visitors

19 February - Jim Riseley, Collections Manager: The Gallery Collection

11 March – Artist, Catherine Ducker: Good Intentions

Sessions run from 10–11.30 am. But as the gallery is closed to the general public on those days ring 01225 477232 for access information or email

Kersti Haabjoern - Kersti\_Haabjoern@bathnes.gov.uk

## Theatres

### Bristol Hippodrome

1 February - Wicked – a musical and devilish spin on the Wizard of Oz

9 March – Matthew Bourne’s ballet Edward Scissorhands

14 March - Jesus Christ Superstar

24 April – The Welsh National Opera performs Cosi Fan Tutti by Mozart

15 May - The hit musical Hamilton

Where shows have a touch tour they should be booked separately. To find out more about the Access for All service - email bristoladmin@theambassadors.com or call the access booking line 0333 009 5399 for tickets

### Bristol Old Vic

3 February – A contemporary, new production of Shakespeare’s tragedy – Macbeth

23 March – Starter for Ten – A bright new musical based on the book and film. A coming of age comedy about love, belonging and a dream to be on University Challenge.

For more details ring the Box office – 0117 987 7877

### Bath - Theatre Royal

10 February - Emma Rice’s Wise Children company bring their own sense of theatrical wit and wonder to Blue Beard.

23 March – The Kite Runner – Direct from Broadway. Based on the novel by Khaled Hosseini it tells a tale of friendship that stretches from Afghanistan to America.

For tickets and information phone the box office on 01225 448844 and ask to subscribe to the Theatre’s Access List

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Tel 0117 322 4885, Email info@sightsupportwest.org.uk

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